



Full Steam Ahead

By C. W. McCullough

HEBER CITY, seat of Wasatch County, is the proud possessor of great versatility. Nestled in the broad valley of the Provo, its feet are firmly rooted in an enduring agricultural economy that is watered by many streams which flow from three-quarters of the compass points.

Towering above the pastoral beauty of cultivated fields, rugged mountains yield richly of mineral wealth, lumber and forage; mountains that provide a wide array of close at hand summer and winter sports areas.

Wide, well-lighted streets, modern stores and mercantile establishments, and attractive homes attest to Heber City's

Town of The Week

prosperity. Fine schools, churches, a library, a community center are fitting landmarks which tell their story of a progressive people. Historically, the Heber Valley boasts of 90 years of a colorful and dynamic past beset with Indian wars, pioneer hardships and the problems of high altitude farming.

Heber City is all of these things—and more! It is the community and shopping center host to numerous towns and settlements in its vicinity; Midway, Charleston, Daniels Creek, Wallsburg, Center Creek, Lake Creek, Hailstone and Keetley. The bond of kinship, rooted in a pioneer past when defense against the redskin demanded unity, carries over into these modern times of security, paved roads and the automobile.

THE FIRST OCCUPATION of Heber Valley dates back to 1857, when ranches were established near what is now Charleston. Two years later witnessed the first settlement of the Heber City area. In 1862, Wasatch County was created by legislative action and embraced much of the territory now comprising Duchesne and Uintah Counties. Heber Valley was not surveyed until 1875.

Meanwhile under the Mormon communal system, tracts of 10, 20 and 40 acres had been allotted to the various settlers and held by them under squatters

rights. After the survey, the claims had to be filed upon as homesteads in tracts of 160 acres each. This was done by one of the several owners, who, after receiving final papers, deeded back to his neighbors their several parts.

THE BLACKHAWK INDIAN WAR involved the Heber Valley settlements at a particularly inopportune time when the majority of settlers were scarcely established in their new homeland. Fighting broke out in 1865

when the U. S. government was so engrossed with the Civil War as to be unable to send military aid. Although most of the fighting occurred in the Provo area, the burden of holding in check the nearby Uintah Indians under Chief Tabiona fell entirely upon the Wasatch County militia.

Chief Blackhawk, in planning his uprising, had counted heavily upon the Uintahs to carry death and destruction to the upper valley settlements. When the settler's militant defense limited the Uintah activities to a series of raids and peace was concluded with Chief Tabiona, the backbone of the Blackhawk War was broken. Constant military preparedness, however, was maintained by the Heber militia until the final defeat of Blackhawk in 1868.

Reviewing those stormy years, Heberites are still acutely aware of the debt they owe to Capt. William Wall, pioneer leader and soldier, whose name is carried on by numerous descendants and the settlement of Wallsburg below Charleston. To Capt. Wall, more than to any other man, can be attributed the vigilant organization of the valley's defenses, the bloodless war and the psychological victory over Chief Tabiona. His wisdom, courage and leadership during those grim years have become legendary; a legend that history confirms glowingly.

ALONG WITH CAPT. WALL, another militia captain, Joseph S. Murdock, stalks out of the past to take a justly deserved curtain call. But it was in the political field rather than the military where Joseph Murdock made his outstanding contribution to the destiny of Heber Valley and Wasatch County. It was his lot to represent his county in the state legislature at a time when the adjoining counties of Summit and Utah were casting covetous eyes upon newly discovered mining fields just across the Wasatch County lines and seeking to annex these areas to their own. Powerful interests were behind the "grab" and Joseph Murdock fought them almost alone.

When the hour of voting ar-

rived, he knew his cause was lost but he stood in the legislative chamber and hurled his defiance in a few quietly spoken words.

"Wasatch County," he said, "takes what comfort it may in the fact that it, like the Savior, has been crucified between two thieves."

A sentence as epochal as Bryan's 'Cross of Gold'! It took the listeners by storm and crystallized a new sense of fairness and justice in the lawmakers. Wasatch County's lines remained unchanged.

PLEASING AS ARE the visitor's impressions of the Heber Valley and its mountain habitat, there is much more to the area than first meets the eye. Close by at Midway are the famous swimming resorts of the Hot Pools. Here is a fading relic of a Yellowstone Park geyser region of earlier ages. The ancient limestone cones and an extensive area underlain with thick deposits of "pot-rock" remain as fascinating evidences of tremendous aquathermal activities.

Improved roads take the motorist quickly into lovely mountain canyons and to heights of inspiring panoramic vistas. The drive from Heber City past the Deer Creek Reservoir down Provo Canyon leads one intimately through the magic mountain Timpanogos tumbling streams, natural parks and the nation's most southerly glacier. The Alpine Scenic Loop continues on down American Fork Canyon in fascinating descents that make it a worthy contemporary of Europe's more publicized Alpine highways.

The canyon streams teem with trout and for those Isaac Waltsons who delight in trolling for the big ones, the Deer Creek Reservoir is growing in popularity. In the surrounding mountains are world famous mines and extensive areas of still undeveloped mineral riches. The production of lumber and timber products is an important and growing industry while agriculture and stock raising continue as the basic economy first envisioned by the valley's pioneer settlers. East of Heber is an ex-

tensive area of petrified wood deposits, fine in texture and rich in colorations to delight the collector and lapidarist.

HEBER CITY IS RECOGNIZED as a community of attractive, comfortable homes. Its business district, characterized with modern stores, cafes, motels and mercantile establishments, is one worthy of a much larger town and bespeaks the extensive area it serves. Like most American towns, Heber is currently in the grip of growing pains. It has a definite housing shortage and has outgrown many of its public utilities. Under the leadership of its newly elected mayor, Maron R. Hyatt, the community is taking aggressive steps to overcome these shortcomings.

Funds have been made available for the building of a new power plant on Snake Creek above Midway to augment the output of electricity from the municipal plant on the Provo. A modern firehall is also to be built this year. Anticipating further growth and expansion, a survey of sewer and water system development is being made.

CARRYING ON THE FINE traditions of the past, the Heber Valley is blessed with an enviable group of young people who are dedicating their youth and enthusiasm to civic progress and development. Ask any dozen of these youth picked at random and they will tell you that there is no place like Heber in which to live—and they'll do it in such a way that you'll wonder if you are not missing something by living elsewhere.

Paralleling these activities, Heber has an active and progressive Lions Club, the Heber Valley Riding Club, the Wasatch Wild Life Association and many other groups that contribute their part toward making Heber tick. The annual three-day county fair attracts visitors from great distances. The Heber High School is recognized and feared throughout the state whether in athletics, debating, public speaking or other scholastic competitions. The support given these projects and activities makes Heber City a poor place in which to retire—if you are under 80.

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